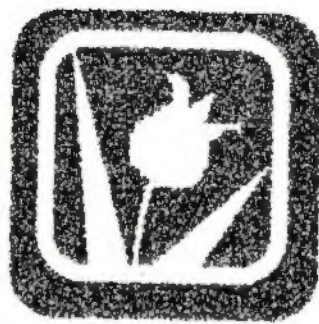


# **CATCH THE PRAIRIE WIND**

**POETRY BY ANN REID**



**First Edition  
Spring, 2000**

**Compiled and Edited  
by  
Carol Reid**

## FORWARD

When I first met Ann Reid in 1957, I didn't know what a long-standing friendship we would have, nor how much that friendship would enrich my life.

Her farm girl background did not make her seem a likely candidate for the roles of artist and poet that were in her heart. As we shared a mutual appreciation for the works of great poets, it became apparent that Ann had within herself the talent for putting words into poetry.

Having had the pleasure, on occasion, of being a sounding board for works in progress, I learned that the creation of a beautiful poem requires drawing from deep within the heart and mind.

I am greatly pleased that the poetry that represents so many years of loving work is now brought together into one volume for others to enjoy.

*Doris D. Mohler*

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Original edition edited and arranged by Carol Reid

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### THE SNOWFLAKE

*Slowly, silently, the snowflake  
Drifts toward the barren earth,  
Hesitant to leave  
The heaven of its birth;  
Faithful to its destiny,  
One of a sky-born brood,  
Giving an ermine cloak  
To winter's solitude.*

Winter, 1960

### TREES WITH PURPOSE

Upon this sweeping, level land  
Each tree was placed with loving hand;  
Small seedlings pledged to rich, black loam  
With dreams to one day shield a home.  
Now tall, in solemn squares they stand  
With purpose on this prairie land.

Summer, 1961

### BUTTERFLIES

Today my thoughts are butterflies,  
A-darting up and asking whys;  
A-winging round now here, now there;  
A-seeking who and what and where....

### TIME AND PLACE

I know a place for fret and care,  
A time for sorrow and despair;  
In weary hours filled with rain,  
I find my niche for tears and pain.

I seek the mellow, golden day  
Made just for laughter of the gay,  
Where love is given space to dwell  
Bewitched by Indian summer's spell.  
Autumn, 1961

### NOW ETERNITY

You gave to me  
Moon, stars, the sun--  
A cosmos redone.  
You gave morning, night, noon--  
Ever gone too soon.  
Now eternity  
Is time-realms curled  
In a wind-blown world  
Where dreams like waves  
Haunt rock-cliff caves,  
Then drift to sea...  
Then drift to sea.

Winter, 1961

### SPRING MISSION

Confined by proper cottage wall  
Dwells duty with its constant call;  
Far past brown cedars near the spring,  
A lark alights on fluted wing....  
Now I must go to hear him sing.  
Spring, 1962

### THE ROSE IS LOST

Beneath the sentimental elm,  
Against its blackened base,  
Love, stricken with a mortal wound,  
Lies bleeding with disgrace.

So weep, Lord Byron, in your tomb,  
Millay and Browning, too;  
The harp, the glove, the rose is lost...  
I weep along with you.  
Now mourn the tender, loving sigh,  
The fragile, jeweled tear,  
The sword beneath the claret cloak,  
The sonnet souvenir.

The grave is dug beneath the elm  
Where love will turn to dust,  
While time, the booted victor, cheers  
Sophisticated lust.

Spring, 1962



### DEMAND OR DESIRE

Watch the sea-gulls  
Pierce the spray;  
Shrieking, swirling,  
They obey  
Demand, desire--  
Who can know?  
Screaming sea-gulls  
Come and go.

Summer, 1962

### JUNE PATTERNS

Across the way as black crows fly,  
An elm tree holds a June-blue sky.

Part of the hill that faces south  
Is screen for a fox den's open mouth.

Clean, dainty tic-tacs in soft clay  
Record a doe's remissful play.

Moist green and gold in grass and vine--  
A garter snake coils a design.

Around the bend of shore, wave hewn,  
There boomerangs the cry of loon.

Smooth ripples close on bass and fly...  
An elm tree holds a June-blue sky.

Summer, 1963

### WINGED OCTOBER

Autumn shadows, gaunt and tall,  
Leaning on my orchard wall,  
Stretch their fingers, catch and hold  
Brassy leaves of claret gold,  
Stilled as evening fragrance brings  
Kismet, borne on rhythmic wings.

### TO WORK AGAIN (November 22, 1963)

A leader falls  
And nations weep;  
A trumpet calls--  
A servant keeps  
A rendezvous with God.  
A wound is made  
In freedom's cause;  
The cost is weighed  
As free men pause  
On Arlington's green sod.  
The champion's horse  
Is led away;  
The drum remorse  
Has had its day  
Of mourning tears and pain.  
The living rise  
To move ahead;  
With lifted eyes  
They leave the dead  
And go to work again.

### KING OF THE HILL

The hill is cold unwanted stone,  
The morning frozen white.  
A pheasant cock upon his throne  
Has dawn reduced to flight.  
Colliding notes of voice undone  
Now climb the atmosphere,  
Where sun dogs squatting near the sun  
Must surely quake with fear.  
This braggart with his lordly call,  
Stirs hens from fields of brown,  
Where winter trees are stretched too tall,  
Like outcasts watching town.  
Wild bird with fire on your breast,  
With thunder tamed to wing,  
It is your crow that proves your crest,  
And shows the world a king.

Winter, 1963

### YOU HOLD IN TRUST

You hold in trust my anxious heart,  
Yet I can travel free;  
For time and miles do not impart  
A lesser memory.  
You are a part of every day,  
Throughout each joy and care,  
While evening shadows sent away  
Leave you as answered prayer.  
Your love has bridged the deepest night,  
Where lonely hours weep;  
It comes in dreams of lilac light  
To blanket me with sleep.

Spring, 1964

### SUMMER COMES TO COTTAGE HILL

Stack the boards of winter,  
Brush the cobweb from the door,  
Clear the porch for action--  
Orders pave the way for more.

Open wide each window,  
Feed the birds that come to call,  
Peek into the boathouse,  
Hear an outboard catch and stall.

Fit the dock for fishing,  
Watch that bobber poised to dive,  
Comb the sand for treasure,  
Feel the season come alive.

Populate the frontage,  
Bring the turtle, mermaid, swan,  
Prune the suckers from the locust--  
Wonder where the day has gone.

Summer, 1964

### ONCE UPON A RAINBOW

I felt quite young this morning,  
Or was it yesterday?  
I think it was a morning  
In early June or May.  
Last year seems rather recent;  
It must have been before.  
I know I danced on rainbows,  
Then clapped my hands for more.

Spring, 1965

### WAS IT YESTERDAY?

Anita, was it yesterday  
We waded in the ponds of May,  
Then climbed the summer apple trees  
That tore our nails and barked our knees;  
Filled dinner pails with butterflies,  
Used sun and mud to make our pies?  
Remember how we cut our curls  
To earn the envy of the girls?  
It does not seem so long ago,  
Yet children call to let us know  
That they are parents (oh, what joy)  
Now we are Grandmas; it's a boy!  
Spring, 1965

### SCENT OF LILAC

The scent of lilac waited  
Beyond my mortal view,  
Where ritualistic bluebirds  
Were sipping crystal dew.  
The daffodil had frolicked  
When crocus fringed the lawn,  
While lilac buds were waiting  
In the reaches holding dawn.  
As velvet-fingered sunlight  
Enchanted bud and tree,  
It collected lilac fragrance  
And spilled a drop on me....  
Spring, 1966

### GOOD-BY CAN BE A WISHING WORD

Good-by can be a wishing word  
When given to a friend,  
A word of wealth with memories  
To save or freely spend.  
It holds the wish for morning sun,  
For evening sweet with dew,  
A star-filled sky to curtain night  
And days in shades of blue.  
It asks for spring with orchard buds,  
For autumn, warm and gay,  
A summer holding yellow birds,  
A lucid winter day.  
Good-by, good-by, a wishing word,  
A word that should not cry  
Or cling to winds that never rest--  
A wishing word, good-by.  
Summer, 1967

### SHADOW OF OCTOBER

The shadow of the young snow goose  
Grew bolder with the sun,  
In noisy take-off, cleared the slough  
Below the cattle run.  
The flyway lent both speed and grace  
To wing-tips dipped with night  
Above the flaming gold-bronze wood  
With shadow flanking right.  
The standing corn and beans gave way  
To furrowed rows of brown;  
The graveled road, to ribboned lanes  
Which squared to mark the town.  
The shadow of the young snow goose  
Must settle with the sun  
Beyond the tranquil field of dusk  
To face the loaded gun.

Autumn, 1967



### ALMOST AUTUMN

Weeping willows stand aside  
To watch the end of summer.  
Apple-flavored crispness lifts  
From harvest-burdened altar.  
Boundary blur of early mist  
Finds time is now deciding  
Cunning ways to snare the wind  
That autumn imps are riding.

September, 1966

### ON SNOW

First falls are lovely, clear and white.  
It is a must for Christmas night.

A ball of it may cause distrust.  
A skier waits for it to crust.

Good pay is doled out by the hour  
For demonstrated shoveling power.

The depth is measured by some sales.  
It's blamed when certain power fails.

The youngsters play out in the stuff  
And never seem to get enough.

It clings to boots right to the door;  
Then drips in puddles on the floor.

Confession: I am one of those  
Who dearly loves it when it goes.

### EARLY MORNING UNICORN

I see the dappled unicorn  
Touch the wind with silver horn;  
Paw through snow to drink the stream  
Before the dawn is fully born.

A piece now placed in magic dream,  
Fancied part of nature's scheme,  
Leaps the bank of willow tree  
To bridge the early morning beam.

I thrill astounded now to see,  
He has paused to wink at me.  
Vanish, go, my unicorn,  
Away, away to heel and flee,  
Away, away, my fantasy....  
Spring, 1971

### APRIL - APRIL

April-April, come to me;  
Bring with you the budded tree,  
Gilded sun and bouncy rain,  
Wistful wind on weather vane,  
Tender grass and bird a-wing,  
Tiny blossom, scent to cling,  
Honey bee with busy scheme,  
Gentle day and time to dream.  
April-April, come to bring  
Fearless fever, name is Spring!  
Spring, 1972



### FLASH OF BLUE

A flash of blue in the morning--  
The sun on a bluebird wing!  
My spirit soars to summer;  
Yet it is only spring.

Spring, 1973

### RIVER RAIN

Little river, wind away,  
Right in tune this rainy day.  
Mist grey clouds are trailing low,  
Following the way you go.  
Raindrop dimples brush your face,  
Lost anew in time and space.  
Wander on for all is gain;  
Gently comes the river rain.

Summer/Autumn, 1973

### MICHAEL ALAN REID (On his seventh birthday)

Michael Alan, birthday lad--  
Star to sister, Mom and Dad--  
Climber of trees/Skinner of knees/  
Feeder of bunnies/Reader of funnies/  
Artist of horses/Crosser of courses/  
Dreamer of dreams/Schemer of schemes/  
Worker of wood/Wearer of hood/  
Creator of plays/Counter of days/  
No-er of yeses/Guesser of guesses/  
"Grand's" and parents' pride and joy--  
Michael Alan, birthday boy.

Your Grandmom  
October, 1974

### EARLY STAR (To Tom)

You have climbed a mountain  
Searching for an early star,  
Buoyant, filled with living,  
You have traveled fast and far,  
Hearing mystic trumpets  
Only you can understand,  
Now come home triumphant  
With the star in outstretched hand....  
Spring, 1975

*"A lovely poem to Tom. I am sure he is sorely missed. Marilyn and I surely agree with your thoughts. He had such a promising future."*

Carl O. Bretzke, M.D.  
Hutchinson, Minnesota

### DREAM HAWK

The fog retreats before the sun  
To thus reveal the stream;  
With crystal clarity I see  
Its wavelets in my dream.  
Amid the ripples--resting there--  
Is an image in a tree,  
A red-tailed hawk, alert but still,  
In splended majesty.  
A moment more and then the lunge  
Assigned to darkest deep,  
Now tilts its wings into the wind  
To lift me from my sleep.

Summer/Autumn, 1975

### TREES IN WINTER

Silver maples lean  
Against the hill;  
Their wind-scrubbed limbs  
Are strained and still.  
Awaiting lyric notes  
That birds will sing  
When river winds set free  
Impatient spring.

### GOD IS LOVE

My God is love  
Forever and beyond  
Where mystic music  
Guards the end of time.  
He knew my name  
Before I was conceived  
And called to me  
Before my ears could hear.  
I knew His face  
While yet my eyes were blind;  
Now as I climb  
Throughout each minute, day,  
Into the waiting year,  
I know that I am His--  
My God is Love.  
Spring, 1976

### HILL AND SHADOW

There is a shadow on the hill;  
I think it is a whip-poor-will--  
A Phoenix that the May can bring;  
Perhaps at sundown it will sing.  
Spring/Summer, 1977

### SUNLIGHT

My wall is warm with sunlight  
Thus apples wrought in gold  
Enclosed in silver pictures  
Are more than mind can hold.

A fog curtails the sun rays  
As curtains made of lace  
And once again my still-life  
Is hung in its old place.

Spring/Summer, 1978

### AFFINITY

A voice so warm  
It wraps me in quiet contentment....  
Spring/Summer, 1979

### RIVER IN APRIL

The river swallowed up the rain,  
Each dented drop and more,  
When it absorbed the run-off from  
Each saturated shore;  
Then swollen, muddy, full of filth,  
It searched all through the day--  
Just waiting, looking for that calm  
That comes when it is May.  
Spring, 1979

## TO DORIS DEE

O when I see a shining golden bird  
Or note a sunrise quite beyond belief,  
Thrill to a song, read a cherished word,  
Or view with awe the wave upon some reef,  
My thoughts will wing their special way to you.  
Whenever pristine flowers reach their peak  
And scents of early autumn days prevail  
On overgrowth upon a rocky trail,  
My thoughts will wing their special way to you.  
I am content to know in pure philosophy  
That you, my dearest friend,  
mean many things to me.

Autumn/Winter, 1979

## HANDS

Observe the hands, watch close and well.  
Skilled eyes hide much that hands will tell.

## IT WORKS

There is order in confusion--  
These books are heaped just so.  
Those files may seem disordered  
To one who does not know  
Which papers suit which corners,  
That books have certain fit.  
The working combination?  
I know where I put it....

Spring/Summer, 1980

## SUMMER MUSE

I sit beside the river  
Where now the wood ducks lend  
Their vibrant calls and colors  
A bit beyond the bend.  
Engulfed with heady fragrance,  
The wild phlox blossoms nod  
Above the Tom Thumb pebbles  
That mingle with the sod.  
A breath of wind pulls motion  
From off the willowed shore,  
Then sews an edge of ruffles  
On a liquid pinafore.  
I dream beside the river  
And feel my spirits lift;  
I lean toward the water,  
Then set my thoughts adrift....  
Spring/Summer. 1981

## CONSOLATION

The sound of the violin  
Is as soft as liquid  
Tears, overflowing.  
Spring, 1982

## FUTURISTIC

It is neither here nor now  
Nor what is in the past,  
But what is in the future  
That is made to last.  
August, 1982



ANGEL GIRL  
(For Becky Jo)

A suit of green and daffodil  
Is clasped at neck with many a frill.  
A magic wand with amber light  
Surrounds a most enchanting sight--  
She wears her years so awfully well  
(Eleven of them as most can tell).  
Her long brown hair is held in place  
Above the artful, made-up face  
That holds the warm and sunny eyes  
Of an angel girl in clown disguise.  
April, 1982

FAREWELL TO PETER

Do not look back;  
The challenge is ahead.  
With vital step  
Proceed where you are led.  
Do not look back;  
Let there be no regret,  
For you remain  
With each that you have met.  
Spring/Summer, 1984

WINDOWS

A thousand gleaming windows  
A-shining in the sun.  
Were I their window washer,  
I'd wish I were not one.

NO ONE IS PERFECT

Logic tells me  
I need to be  
More consistent  
More persistent  
More resistant  
Then logically  
It says to me  
Take two of three.  
Spring/Summer, 1986

A LADY

She is lavishly pampered,  
Wears denim or lace.  
Her voice is pure honey;  
She moves with true grace.  
She is sure of her beauty;  
It seems most unreal,  
But beyond this external  
Lives a lady of steel.

Spring/Summer, 1986

## THE FROZEN LAKE

The angry waves were cornered, trapped  
In icy angles by the cold.  
Now held at bay, their spirits sapped,  
They still rebel with each sharp fold.

No youngster dares with shiny blades  
To cross this lunar-like domain,  
And snow machines on long parades  
Are careful not to strike a claim.

The hiker moves with bodeful dread  
While dog and fox both turn away;  
The hunter with his snowshoe tread  
Will not return another day.

All winter long the lake will stand  
Devoid of life, a no man's land.

Autumn/Winter, 1986

## DAISY DAYLIGHT

Daylight comes upon the daisy.  
Petals, holding more than dew,  
Create an aura--crown the daisy  
Close above the meadow view.

Daylight comes upon the daisy,  
Center bright like hammered gold.  
Fragile flower--modest daisy--  
Flows from stem of stronger mold.

Daylight comes upon the daisy.  
Countenance kissed by butterfly.  
Daylight paints upon the daisy  
Flawless charm to beautify....

1987

## SEARCHING

Hide and seek and blind man's bluff.  
One and twenty not enough.  
Sunshine, starlight count the day--  
Always searching come what may.

## THE AMERICAN ELM

Oh, massive elm, you must endure  
Until tomorrow passes by--  
You, whose trunk was quite mature  
When "Westward ho!" was still the cry.  
Umbrella-like, your boughs held thus  
Created shade for those inclined  
To cease from war and so discuss  
The treaties that were penned and signed.  
Now prairie land in huddled style,  
Polluted lakes from acid rain,  
They will remain to last the while;  
Can you withstand the beetle pain?  
Stand stately firm and so secure,  
Your place in time against the sky;  
Oh, massive elm, you must endure  
Until tomorrow passes by.

1988

## YOUNG FEET

Young feet on concrete,  
Could it be that you  
Will never thrill to racing,  
Bare toes dark patterns tracing  
In grassy morning dew?

### TO A FAR-AWAY FRIEND

Enclosed please find a scarf of wool--  
The hours in bright design--  
A fruit wood frame, a miniature  
Of fallow deer and pine.  
I sought and found the perfect robe  
Of early autumn hue;  
Then quite by chance I happened on  
A book of poems for you.  
Now these are sent with fond regards--  
Good wishes polished bright  
On evening stars like silver charms  
Or fairy wings in flight.  
For you to find your own desire  
Of glory, fame or wealth,  
A home, a love, a mountain stream  
Complete with peace and health.  
I send these items wrapped with care  
And tied with much ado,  
All stoutly packed beneath these stamps,  
Insured by post to you....

1989

### DARBY IN THE RAIN

I like the casual way you wear  
The rain so lightly in your hair;  
And on your lashes, misty sheen  
To compliment your eyes of green.

I see you rain-washed, clean of care,  
Aglow with sunshine you must share.  
A dainty halo's pastel hue  
Has now become a part of you.

### A RIVER WALK

Oh, for the joy of walking,  
To keep the steady pace--  
There is no need for talking  
Or going any place.  
I walk down by the river  
Where the songs of birds rebound,  
And the green is all aquiver  
In tune with bursting sound,  
Where violets bloom in number  
Above the nestled moss,  
And rocks lay deep in slumber,  
Not counting any loss.  
Oh, for the joy of walking  
To keep the steady pace--  
There is no need for talking  
Or going any place.

1990



### ELOOGWA

A Minnesota lake home  
Has a tall and storied frame;  
All the glories of "Eureka!"  
Should be captured in its name.  
I searched through page and picture,  
Then selected one with mirth--  
An Indian name--Eloogwa,  
Fits our paradise on earth.  
So I paint the name with ardor  
And erect it on our soil,  
Then confess the apt translation  
Means: "I labor, work and toil."

1990

### APPLE ART

Delightful fruit, why hang so high,  
Embroidered there upon the sky?  
With trunk and twig between us two,  
Illusive promise clings to you.  
No certain knowing, sweet or sour,  
Has whispered, "Climb, now climb this hour."  
So when I turn reluctantly,  
I know I fear so high a tree.

1991

(Aided in earning the poet the Gold Award of  
Merit from the World of Poetry, Sacramento,  
California)

### WEBS WITH DEW

here across the field  
an early morning show  
endless webs are caught  
where displaced flowers grow  
the dim gray light escapes  
highlighting fence and log  
everywhere involved designs  
beneath the heavy fog  
some are tiny some are large  
and some are in between  
awestruck we move away  
remembering what we've seen

1992

### THE MEADOWLARK

The air of morning  
Is sweet with mist  
To hold the notes  
So true and clear.  
It sweeps my spirit clean....

1992

### TRUE BEAUTY

All mortal beauty, weighed and tried  
By just, exacting scale,  
Finds modesty must balance pride  
Or beauty's being fail.

1993

### EPIGRAM

I have a strong philosophy  
For as the guardian of my fate,  
All my work depends on me,  
So oft as not I make it wait.

### COMMON GROUND

Martin McLeod was an explorer who found  
Where the prairie met the wood--  
A rich land--and he called it good.  
Now we stand here together on  
*COMMON GROUND.*

### SNOWED UNDER

There was a smart skier named Joe  
Who was properly taught to think snow  
As he drove to the lift  
His thoughts started to drift  
Now Joe's thinking snow from below.

### LETTER TO A TEACHER

Do visions come in color?  
Are they rented by the day?  
When dreams are sold for wholesale,  
Are they wrapped up while you pay?  
If laughter comes in sizes,  
Are the sizes ready-made?  
Can music make a movement  
Before the notes are played?  
Is grace a thing to measure?  
Can squares act in the round?  
If talents are computed,  
What figures can be found?

If lines can live forever,  
Will words have room to spread?  
When scenes are re-created,  
Does it mean that they are dead?  
Can confusion come assembled,  
And will silence break apart?  
When do questions form an answer?  
Why is teaching called an art?

1993

## REHEARSAL OF A MELODRAMA

"Foiled again!"  
The villain dies,  
His body stiff with rage.  
"Saved again,"  
The lady sighs--  
Then trips in center stage.  
"Triumphant again!"  
The hero cries  
His lines to backstage wall.  
"Over again,"  
The director tries  
To curb his urge to bawl.

## WAKE OF WINTER

The morning sun  
Unveils a world of white  
In fragile frost.  
Here Loveliness, Delight and Grace  
Adorn the woodland path.  
Each twig of tree, each bush and blade,  
Is hung with snowy lace;  
A hush, cathedral-like, prevails.  
One lonely frost flake drifts  
To touch my cheek and is a tear;  
Humility attends...  
To watch and wait with me.

## STUFF AND THINGS

The world is made of stuff and things,  
Concrete walls and silver wings,

Little boxes, big machines,  
Left and Right and inbetweens;  
Sunset colors, morning dew,  
Snowdrift clouds on miles of blue;  
Plastic bags and ready-mix,  
Souped-up jobs with four-speed sticks,  
Paperbacks and disco noise,  
Macrame and monster toys;  
Diet foods, the TV meal,  
Solid oak and polished steel,  
Parking tags and conference rooms,  
Chapel bells and hallowed tombs;  
Scenic drives and ocean waves,  
Mountain heights and Dead Sea caves;  
Colored glass and smoking stacks,  
Poverty and income tax,  
Nuclear freezes, angry crowds,  
Mushroom shadows trailing shrouds.

The world is made of stuff and things,  
Concrete walls and silver wings.

## WITH DREAMS

How humble my beginning,  
Close to field and sky,  
Yet rich beyond explaining,  
Remembered with a sigh.  
Long hours given to solitude,  
No clock or call to heed,  
Just mountains, plains of loneliness  
With dreams to hold and feed.



### A TIME BETWEEN

A jet stream arch is loosely hung  
Above a staid September day;  
Each end is fastened, lost among  
The hills where green is brushed with grey.  
Here time is held suspended, caught  
Between the summer and the fall.  
This hour is tender, musing thought  
Of why and who and where withal.

The sunrise colors seep into my waiting soul....

### CHALLENGE

Look above the street lamps, stars--  
Patterned pathways, islands, bars,  
Challenge dreamers, charge them, send  
Thoughts and missiles pledged to bend  
Time and space to mortal hands  
Reaching for new frontier lands.

### HARRIET

Was ever word written  
Or ever song sung;  
Was ever stone carved  
Or picture hung;  
Was ever such beauty  
That man could rend,  
Perfect to mirror  
Love from a friend?

### LOVE'S MANTLE

I wear your love,  
A mantle,  
Closely  
Held  
About  
My being  
Protectively....

### ROBINS AND CURB SERVICE

A pair of robins in the rain  
Beamed in below my window pane,  
On instinct tuned to guide their wings  
To living's most essential things.  
They land exact upon the spot  
I'd loosened in my garden plot.  
Curb service waited just below--  
Two worms right now and two to go.

### FIRST LOVE

Pink violets and rainbows  
Within this world are rare,  
Now fragrant, hushed, like primrose,  
They blossom everywhere.  
Sheer crystal, shining silver,  
Appear in softest mist;  
Clear fountains spill with laughter,  
For she's the girl he kissed.

## IMMORTALITY

Love is life, a truth sublime,  
Traveling through aeons of time;  
It was forever so....

Life is love unending, new,  
Ever old and so lives through  
The ages. This we know...

## FUTILITY

Teacups filled with water,  
Cups that tip and spill,  
    Every day more teacups,  
    Empty cups to fill.

Teacups filled with water,  
Broken cups to mend,  
    Countless rows of teacups,  
    Cups to fill and tend.

Teacups filled with water,  
Never cold or hot,  
    Luke-warm, half-filled teacups  
    From a luke-warm pot.

Teacups filled with water,  
Emptied down the drain,  
    Every day more teacups,  
    Cups to fill again.

## AN ORIGINAL DAY

Skylight, admit the blue-grey of  
harmonious dawn; absorb the stars  
like diamond chips that rattle  
through my dreams....

Skylight, induct that circular  
burst of sun which heralds in  
the makings of an original day.

## REALITY

Devoid of leaf, of limb and moss,  
Storm-tested for its worth,  
The tree still lives, confronting loss,  
A monument to birth.

Youth stands beneath this vital tree  
That reaches to the sky;  
He christens it "Reality,"  
Then bows his head to cry.

## SUMMER IS FOR KNOWING

Summer is for knowing.  
Guessing is for spring.  
Winter is for waiting.  
Autumn's everything....

## LEAF TO AUTUMN

Come in slowly, Autumn;  
Move with cautious care;  
Enter breathing softly;  
Catch me unaware.  
Come to lift me swiftly  
With your winging call  
Up through drifts of color  
Gently guide my fall.  
To the heap of harvest,  
Join me to the earth....  
Do we call this dying  
Or another birth?

## ONE LONELY FLOWER

A blossom tips  
And spills its rationed dew  
From wearied lips  
Upon the avenue.  
  
A careless foot,  
A fixed, unfeeling wheel,  
A rain of soot  
Is foe that cannot feel  
For wounded blade  
With worried, tired bloom  
That lives afraid  
Of endless doom.  
This sun-bound street  
Has beauty sorely pressed  
And in retreat  
Before its hostile breast.  
  
One lonely flower  
Must yearn for wooded shade  
And evening's hour....

## A LEGACY OF GRACE

A redbird sings  
Above a faded hill  
Where beauty clings  
Quiescent, still.

Grey shadows hold  
A house long lost in trees,  
Neglected, old  
And wise with memories.

This century  
Has walked with heavy tread  
Past house and tree  
Which mourn their buried dead.

Here stand far more  
Than walls of wood and stone.  
These hold full store  
Of sweat, of blood and bone.

Warm joy, cold fears  
Have seasoned board and beam  
While hopes and tears  
Are sealed in crack and seam.

Old house, once proud,  
Once blessed with honor, too,  
Must wear this shroud  
Of years which claim their due.

Now grim decay  
Endeavors to erase  
What former day  
Has etched in lines of grace.



### RELUCTANT SPRING

Send the bobolink and robin;  
This winter wears too long.  
Send the meadowlark and blue jay;  
Our world is short of song.

Give us blackbirds with their red wings.  
We tire of drifts too cold.  
Give us orioles and warblers,  
Flamboyant, joyful, bold.

Lend us clouds of song and color  
With warmth of flirting wing;  
These to burst the heart of winter  
And bait reluctant spring.

### CABIN FEVER

You chase across the rainbowed hue,  
To search the here and now throughout.  
You ask again the why are you?  
And what is winter all about?  
The beauty viewed is very real,  
Though pale and frigid as can be;  
You look on it with eyes that feel  
A warmth that only you can see.  
Endeavor comes and goes again  
As fickle as the falling snow;  
You sit and wait, admitting pain  
That slowly ebbs in Easter glow.

### THE WINDS OF MARCH

The winds of March are roaring  
About the small log home  
Where drifts of snow are melting  
To show the deep black loam.

### I WISH I COULD

When summer comes in very late  
Then bursts in suddenly,  
I shall be close behind my gate  
To lock it in with me....

### DECEIT

Beware the man of worldly guise  
Seduces gals with words and eyes  
Then hides behind his wife with lies.

### ROYALTY

I'm crushed with doubt it seems;  
Is this a 'dog' we own?  
For as a "Queen" she deems  
Our sofa is her throne.

### WHY I WRITE

Here is pencil; here is pen.  
I am waiting for the when--  
When to start, when to cease--  
In between is rhymed release.

### THE EGOTIST

Observe my island  
Built in sand  
With rugged coastline  
Steep and grand.  
Approach the shore,  
But there remain.  
Alone I built  
And do maintain  
Without the help  
From you or you;  
I am sufficient  
Through and through.  
Now turn the pages  
Of the past;  
The records show  
This cannot last.  
But bear in mind  
That History  
Has yet to meet the likes of me.

### ONE PERFECT BUD

One perfect bud of subtle pink  
A rose to make one stop and think  
Of bird and beast and butterfly,  
Of sun and rain, of earth and sky,  
Of humankind to stop and hold  
And watch one perfect bud unfold.

### MORNING

The morning colors are refreshing  
All touched with crystal drops of dew.  
The gentle sunlight is uplifting  
And inspires one to start anew.

### the bell

the bell hangs silent  
high in a planned tower  
above a splended church  
it hangs silent

once it was not so  
on a busy corner  
where school children play  
near a pleasant park  
it rang joyously  
a gift from martha's vineyard  
in the century past  
its tones were clear and true  
to call the worshipers  
to alert the citizens  
to toll for the dead  
now the bell is silent  
it greets the morning sun  
and is silent  
it sees the sun at noontime  
and is silent  
it sees the evening sun  
and is silent  
locked in its silence by neglect  
waiting to be freed  
so its tones can be heard  
over the countryside

the bell hangs silent

### SOLITUDE

Far back among the balsam fir,  
One half-forgotten treasure--  
A small abode with quaint allure  
To give enduring pleasure.  
The silence here is intertwined  
Remotely with mute sorrow,  
But with the solitude we find  
A hope that is tomorrow.

### A STRANGER

A "Killdeer" cry  
Alerts my mind to danger--  
I know that I  
Am in this land a stranger.  
Now light, afloat,  
And softly treading duty,  
Things learned by rote  
Become a source of beauty.

### PERHAPS

My surplus pounds  
Are parting so reluctantly,  
Perhaps because  
I care for them so liberally....

### MIRRORED MORSEL

One rare morsel of sweetness  
In an empty day,  
Mirrors hidden kindness  
Seldom on display.

### SNOW

Fragile snow--  
White on white,  
Fairy formed,  
Angel light,  
Winter chilled--  
Above, below--  
Heaven-sent,  
Silent snow....

### HEAR THE GEESE

High along the stratus clouds,  
Geese relay their notes in tempo--  
Feel the wound--the echo in that  
Secret room within your being;  
Loud and clear their countless voices  
Calling, returning to their beginning;  
Follow close their strident din,  
Hear spring moving, moving in....

### APRIL RAIN IS

April rain is magic  
Stealing through the dusk,  
Hiding gifts of healing  
Under moss and musk.

April rain is music,  
Swelling wood and stream,  
Waking dormant promise  
Born in nature's theme.

### THE SIDEWALK

Troweled green with teenage sweat  
Just before the sun had set,  
Soft gray mud was laid.  
Cold and dark with early mist,  
Soon to be with amber kissed,  
A sunlight promenade.  
Route way for enumerate feet,  
Barrier for the school from street,  
Spread out smooth and clear.  
Yet in corner someone wrote,  
Finger-printed this small note:  
"Kilroy passed by here."

### PASTOR GARY

Five years were taken from your life;  
You gave it as a gift.  
Where there was friction, even strife,  
You came to bridge the rift.  
You did not come alone but bore  
Christ's burden carried high.  
Such genuine concern you wore;  
We felt the discord die.  
And now Christ's love begins to swell  
And move among us all.  
So with that love, we wish you well  
Responding to your call....

### A TRUISM

"The majority is always right,"  
You sound quite pompous as you say it.  
The minority is not always wrong,  
And I am humble as I weigh it.

### JILL AND SUMMER

Summer took a walk with Jill,  
Yellow bird and daffodil;  
Paused to view in proud display,  
Kite and cloud in twin ballet,  
Mirrored sailboat standing by,  
Waiting entrance to the sky;  
Dared the sun to miss its cue  
And leave the flower-scented dew;  
Played awhile here and there  
Deepened suntan, bleached the hair;  
Watched the smallest living thing  
Crawl and wriggle, find its wing;  
Called the hour to stretch and stir;  
Made a season most prefer.  
Summer took a walk with Jill,  
Hand in hand across my hill.

### PUSSY WILLOW

Tear down the winter decorations,  
Toss out the dried bouquet,  
Bring in the pussy willow--  
For spring is here to stay.

### EVENING

The shadows merging  
With the tide  
Are like dappled sea mares  
With foals at side.



## AUTUMN REASONING

Can we measure the fullness of autumn?  
With a place to end or begin?  
Can we take in a season of splendor  
Then keep count of the webs it will spin?

Can we hold to the trees at their turning?  
And delay their fast, colorful flight?  
Can we store up the fire, leaf burning,  
To enjoy on a winter-wet night?

Will the butterfly pause at our bidding?  
Will the jacketed bee stay to sing,  
So to render a soothing sonata  
While we wait for the curtain of spring?

Can we sum up September with reason  
As the heights of October descend?  
Will we reckon the Indian Summer  
When November has rounded the bend?

## ILLUSION

Alone  
I sense  
Your presence  
Fleeting  
As  
Fragrance  
Escaping  
A dew-brushed rose.

## SONS AND DAUGHTERS FROM AFAR

They come to us in their youth,  
Our sons and daughters from afar.  
They come to us from east and west,  
From north and south, from the highlands  
And the lowlands, from the icy blue fjords,  
The land of the rainforest, the land of desert dune.  
They come to us from island homes.  
They come with eyes bright and expectant.  
While some differ in speech, we all learn  
Lessons in sharing and caring.  
Our school opens its doors to them;  
Our churches, too, say, "Welcome."  
They learn about our work.  
We teach them about our play.  
But this is a two-way street.  
We learn so very much from them.  
As years go by and memories fade,  
These trees planted here will remain  
To remind us of our sons and  
Daughters from afar.

*Monday, June 12*

*Ann,*

*Your poem written for the occasion of the  
AFS Park dedication added a personal touch that  
made it special. Thanks a million. And the rain  
stayed away until the very end!  
Cheers!*

*Jay B.*

## THE SNOW

The snowflakes linger on the air,  
A-drifting on each breath or breeze.  
They seem to fill the everywhere  
They fall to land where'ere they please.

## BE NOT CONFORMED

Do not accept this life  
As just a common task--  
A charted course to run,  
For in the changing wind  
Of time a need might ask  
A strong and daring one  
To break a new path unafraid  
Of limitations man has made.

## A PURPLE MORNING

A purple morning blossoms  
Intertwined with time and space,  
Becomes a fractured mushroom  
Edging on archaic grace.  
Dimensions in vibration,  
Time is tripped to spiral back  
And forward in a pattern  
Focused through the zodiac.  
A purple morning blossoms  
Where a leaf can turn to bud;  
Reality is image  
Churned in metamorphic mud.

## SPRING SHALL FIND ME

Spring shall find me waiting...  
Ready for its warming breath,  
Deaf to winter's weeping,  
Feeble on its bed of death.

Spring shall find me reaching...  
Lightly fastened to this earth,  
Tiptoe with elation,  
Wrapped in freshness of rebirth.

Spring shall find me singing...  
Praising Him for gifts that please,  
Balm to soothe heart throbbing,  
Blossoms yielding pure soul ease.

## KID KONFIDENCE

A home-made kite  
As tall as I,  
Awaits first flight,  
But will it fly?

Hear laughter shrill;  
See knowing eyes  
That claim it will.  
It does...it flies!

## LESSON OF LIFE

Let me be clearly taught  
By open yesterdays,  
Tomorrows, dearly bought  
With prudent, tried todays;  
To give continual praise--  
To give unending praise.

## TO MARY

I am grateful for the little things  
That speed my day along--  
The roundness of my doughnut rings,  
A mother wren's quaint song,  
New fragrance from my garden's bloom,  
The freshness of night dew,  
Clear colors in my favorite room,  
A kitten's timid mew.  
I hear the perking in the pot  
Of smooth-and-mirrored chrome,  
And joy comes in a wholesale lot  
When little things mean home.

## TELL ME ROBIN

Robin, tell me where you go  
When the spring is traced with snow?

*"My search for worms is postponed now;  
I sleep beneath a thick fir bough.  
All snug within my feathers warm,  
I fast and dream while cold flakes form.  
Now would the sun return today,  
I am prepared to work or play."*

Robins do know where to go,  
When the spring is traced with snow.

## THIS NIGHT OF NIGHTS

Frost crystals crown the garlands,  
Bells and greens; a thousand  
Candles glow from street lamps,  
Windows, festive lights  
Row on row. Above and over  
All, the moon reflects a greater  
Light on new-spun snow.  
Chimes ring out; an organ  
Swells, "Oh, Holy Night," and voices  
Sing, "A Child is born; the manger  
Holds a King." This night of nights  
A star is hanging low;  
Ten thousand candles glow.

## PRAYER FOR A TRAVELER

Lord, bless the traveler.  
Smooth his way;  
Your hand sustain him  
Through the day.

Keep him from harm.  
Lay straight his road;  
Then with your presence  
Lift up his load.

Be his shade  
From the burning sun;  
Give him sweet rest  
When the day is done.

Drape nights with velvet,  
Dark and deep,  
Pinned with some stars  
To guard his sleep.

As each mile passes,  
Some blessing send;  
Then grant him his dream  
At journey's end.

## REMOTE CONTROL

A flock of blackbirds flying by  
Are darkening the autumn sky.  
They zoom up high, then swoop down low.  
Remote control has told them so.

## EARLY SPRING

Spring is air, buoyant, free  
To seek and find, to spend  
Its youth compulsively  
For obscure dividend.  
Spring is motion, forward-bent,  
Its firm growth to release  
From winter's sheath now rent  
To yield to new increase.

## STONE STAIRS TO NOWHERE

Stone stairs in a garden  
Resting just beyond the gate,  
Leading up to nowhere,  
Built too early or too late.

Things should have a reason:  
Singing fountains feed the pool;  
Birdbaths serve a duty;  
Sundials work by rule.

Stone stairs in a garden,  
No one knows your destined fate,  
Leading up to nowhere,  
Without reason, you must wait.



### A DAY IN AUTUMN

I searched for the spirit of autumn  
Concealed in the misty grey wake  
Of early, still sleepy, pale shadows  
Above the cool shore of the lake.  
I ran with a quickening footstep,  
For it was now dancing ahead  
In staccatoed movements of music  
That rustled the foliage of red.  
It trailed a sweet scent of ripe berries,  
Caught sunlight in flasks of clear dew,  
Then sought the soft shade of the sumac,  
A blanket of brilliant fall hue.  
I watched as it climbed in a smoke ring  
Released from a bonfire's mouth,  
To join with some high, honking migrants,  
Aloft on their journey due south.  
I felt a chill wind as I rested;  
The spirit was well on its way  
As flurries of snowflakes descended  
To curtain the close of the day.

### LIBRARY LADIES

It is a fine library; the lighting is good.  
The tables, the books, stand just as they  
should.  
The teacher stands ready to assist where she can,  
For spread out before her is many a plan.  
On every face is a look of concern,  
For most everyone there is most ready to learn.  
Now here are some ladies that know where it's at,  
For they've come to the library to learn how to  
tat.

### A SPECIAL ROSE

This Rose is a friend of the morning  
That is gentled and dawn-stroked with dew,  
A myriad of hues most enchanting  
In mist that is framed with light blue.

This Rose is a friend of the noontime,  
Resourceful when there is a need,  
She looks on the world with great caring;  
With courage she strives to succeed.

This Rose is a friend of the evening  
When tangerine colors disclose  
With clarity and candor becoming  
A most special kind of a Rose....

### THE SEARCHING VOICE

Hear a voice--  
The cry  
Searching time;  
Who am I?

Conceived in Alpha's light,  
It seeks identity  
Across the stream of night  
Into eternity.

With a voice--  
The cry  
Marking time.  
Who am I?

## MARKING TIME

I hurt,  
So I must hold myself quite carefully  
For splintered fragments  
Fall

from

me.

Step softly world; do not come close.  
I do not care  
To

hurt

you.

Be not so lordly while I am on my knees.  
Oh, laid-back reality,  
Far out my fantasies,  
Stand back and let me breathe.

I hold myself quite carefully  
For now I hurt,  
Oh,

how

I

hurt

While I am marking time.

## IN LIGHT AND SHADOW

Mirrored wall and neon  
Frame a glass in hand--  
Silhouetted dreamer  
Seeks a lotus land.

Shadowed apparition--  
Sculpture without a face,  
Wooden as the table  
Projects the commonplace....

## SHELLY ANN (Granddaughter)

You came to us as a baby, grand--  
Special in each and every way.  
One who can always understand,  
You are grander now today.

## MORNING STREET

The morning street  
Has shed the grey of early dawn  
With sudden shrug;  
It puts aside the waking yawn  
(As friend greets friend  
Along the common, concrete way)  
To reach and stretch,  
Preparing for a busy day.

## NOTHING

This is a thin and wanting day,  
An empty-bellied, hungry day,  
That waits and will not go away;  
    I feel that it is nothing....

Why does it seek and search through me?  
Why fumble, grasp and tear at me?  
Then stare with eyes that do not see?  
    I sense that I am nothing....

How shall I clothe this naked beast?  
How satisfy a starving beast?  
How turn a famine into feast?  
    I know that I have nothing....

## ONE DROP OF RAIN

Slide into a raindrop  
To gain a deeper view.  
Here, as in a teardrop,  
All time is held in lieu.  
Space becomes titanic;  
The future shrinks to naught.  
Truth is seen prophetic,  
And hope is ever wrought.  
Lower now is higher;  
Below becomes above.  
Colors are on fire  
With light reflecting love.

## THE FOG

The fog returns  
Misting the eye  
Softening the corners of the mind  
Chilling the cheek with its weight  
Touching the tongue with cloying lull  
Clinging to the arm and leg  
Creating slow-motion  
Curling into the being  
Numbing freezing stupifying  
Frustrating the senses  
Making goals seem  
Almost unreachable almost  
The fog returns the fog

## YOU LOVE THE SNOW

You love the snow...now so shall I.  
Suppressing my protesting cry  
When willful winter's white descends.

Full well I love the sheer spring mist,  
Lush meadows warmly summer-kissed  
And even more...leaves, autumn blends.

But winter is your special season,  
So I embrace it for that reason;  
You love the snow...now so shall I.

## NOW IT IS APRIL

On April hill  
I clearly heard  
The ice pond spill;  
I watched a bird  
Lift half a home  
In eager flight;  
I touched the loam  
That knew a night  
Of fragrant rain--  
New April rain.

## EARLY AUTUMN

Let your ear be tuned to the blackbirds  
On an early autumn day.  
It's a farewell song they are singing.  
They will soon be on their way.

## POETRY.....

*The condensation of thought, emotion, event--  
sorted and arranged in a manner most suitable for  
pleasant, effective, easily remembered reading.*

## A B C FOR YOU AND ME

A is for acts of assistance we share.  
B is for burden we can help others to bear.  
C stands for causes to be lifted up.  
D stands for dining as together we sup.  
E is for energy we need to progress.  
F is for freedom, our purpose to address.  
G stands for goodness, a trait we admire.  
H stands for healing we hope to acquire.  
I is for illness of which we want no part.  
J is for justice that we hold in our heart.  
K stands for kindness we render to others.  
L stands for love as for children by mothers.  
M is for the message we hear on first day.  
N is for neighbors; they are an endless array.  
O stands for opportunity, the doors open wide.  
P stands for purpose for which we abide.  
Q is for quiet we feel when we pray.  
R is for respect we hope for always.  
S stands for studying; the district urges us to.  
T stands for thankfulness we have something to do.  
U is for understanding those that have tears.  
V is for vision to see through the years.  
W stands for welcome; we want ours to be shown.  
X stands for the creator and mystic unknown.  
Y is for our youth, the wealth of this world.  
Z is for zeal, our banners unfurled.

A B C for you and for me



## REFLECTIONS

The candle flame is burning low  
Reflecting scenes of long ago  
So bright yet dim it vaguely seems  
Like magic brought about by dreams.  
A church set down in the countryside  
Proclaims that love will here abide.  
The rural school still painted white,  
A small reminder of its might.  
Then in the corner sits the store  
With bread and bolts and much, much more.  
A team of horses briskly go  
With muffled beat subdue the snow.  
A chimney's smoke against the sky  
Is frame for birds still flying high.  
The woods are dark with branches spread  
Like fingers held above one's head.  
A pond is clear and crystal bright  
Criss-crossed with blades to shear the light.  
A small fir tree is cut once more  
Tobogganed right up to the door.  
The Book of Luke, the Chapter Two,  
The Christmas Story is read anew.  
A candle flame is burning low,  
Reflecting scenes of long ago.

## WALK WITH ME

Come and walk with me along the road,  
Side by side and yet alone.

## ADVICE

If you must cry, cry softly--  
The hurt is yours to bear.  
No one is seeking anguish;  
There is no need to share.  
A teardrop should be lonely  
With a willingness to hide.  
Observe the unchecked streamlet  
Becomes a flooding tide.  
So if you cry, cry softly--  
Be sparing with your tears.  
You lift no load by crying  
But only add new tears.

(Earned a Gold Award of Merit from the  
World of Poetry, Sacramento, California,  
1986.)

## FALLEN LEAVES

The leaves are floating on the water.  
Some are red, some golden brown.  
Held suspended in the water,  
Then saturated, they go down.

(Over the years, each of the following poems  
has appeared in the Hutchinson *Leader* )

### AIRPORT TEA

Professor Bitterplum  
Had stopped by for tea;  
I offered sugar and lemon  
While he sputtered at me.

Such fussing; such fretting  
And all of that sort;  
“Are the Editor’s letters  
A new form of sport?”

The silence grew awkward;  
I stirred at my tea  
And pondered the question  
He handed to me.

I knew he was serious,  
But in jest I replied,  
“You know, I’m impartial;  
I don’t have a side.”

This set him to snorting,  
But he waited for more  
On the issue of AIRPORT  
That knocked at our door.

“Well, are you for progress  
Or the ‘one-horse shay’?  
Would you want our fair city  
A ghost town some day?

“You live in the country,  
But still you take note;  
You must have an opinion  
If you don’t have a vote.”

I sighed with reluctance,  
Then looked in his eye  
(The monocled blue one,  
The one that was dry).

“Some questions are easy  
While others are tough;  
Must folks know that answers  
Are seldom enough?

“We reach for a planet,  
And the atom is broke;  
A serious endeavor  
Is turned to a joke.

“A conservative gambler  
Makes competitive bets;  
A man born to borrow  
Is an asset to debts.

“Candlelight is becoming;  
A light bulb can break;  
When you decide against walking,  
Your muscles won’t ache.

“The industrious thinker  
Is planning ahead.  
Do all lights switch to yellow  
When the meter is read?

"The negative and positive  
Own a dead-end street;  
The 'pro' men and 'no' men  
Are twain that can't meet.

"If we build a beacon,  
There's a way that is cheap.  
Just use the scrap iron  
From the hitching post heap.

"A jet-streamed teenager  
Drives a sharp Model-T;  
What is good for my children  
Is better for me.

"When dealing with youngsters  
To get the job done,  
Say, 'Don't paint the fence,'  
And the painting is fun."

The Professor feels pity;  
He dabs at an eye  
And patting my shoulder,  
He bids me, "Good-bye."

He picks up his bowler  
And heads for the door  
While I in his footsteps  
Am tempted once more.

"Come back now, next Museday,  
We'll discuss a new poem,  
The tale of an ulcer  
Or the old people's home."

## RECOMMENDATION

Take a lesson--geographic;  
Make this data automatic:  
Note the harbors of Siberia,  
Quote the rainfall in Nigeria,  
Know the peaks in feet and inches,  
Throw in depths of man-made ditches,  
Say that marshland plagues the Iboes,  
Weigh the change in Greenland ice floes,  
Square a desert to the mile,  
Swear to current speed of Nile,  
Name the borders of Pacific,  
Claim statistics; be specific!  
Lose those now out-dated  
WHOPPERS,  
Choose these CONVERSATION  
STOPPERS.

## OLD HOME PLACE

Up the front road, down the back road  
Through the endless trees  
Comforted from the north winds  
Refreshed by the southerly breeze

Amid the evergreens and lilacs  
Where the prairie winds stand still  
Between two apple orchards  
On the farm called Pleasant Hill

## HUTCHINSON CRAZY DAY

Professor Bitterplum  
Came to our town,  
Shaking side-whiskers,  
Wearing a frown.

He clutched his bowler,  
Leaned on his cane,  
Dropped his monocle,  
(Saved by its chain).

He stared at a beatnik  
Eating a cone,  
Fell over a Swami  
In a "No Parking" zone.

He gasped at net stockings,  
Garter and all,  
Followed a Martian  
Bouncing a ball.

He saw tigers and cavemen  
Talking with ease,  
Watched ruffles and grasses  
Swayed by the breeze.

He met with a mad man  
Armed with a gun  
Filled with cold water,  
Shooting for fun.

He blinked at tall headgear,  
Crew cuts and curls,  
Bloomers and nightgowns,  
Barefooted girls.

He took in the counters  
Heaped high with goods,  
Was jostled and tousled,  
Felt lost in the woods.

With maximum values,  
All a great prize,  
Pounds, yards and dozens,  
Store merchandise.

So great the confusion  
Clamor and fun,  
Poor Bitterplum was  
Completely undone.

He swallowed and sputtered,  
Filled with dismay;  
Then someone explained  
It was Crazy Day....



## MIGHTY PREPARATIONS

Mighty is the preparation  
Just before the east turns grey.  
Husband with determination  
Has begun accumulation  
Of a queer conglomeration  
Needed for his fishing day.

Will this mighty preparation  
Catch a fish to break the scale?  
Listen to his proud oration;  
Share his keen anticipation;  
He will surely catch a whale.

Mighty are the preparations  
Waiting at the close of day.  
Soothing are the medications;  
Gentle are the applications;  
Longish are the explanations,  
--For the big one got away.

## MOON IN THE MORNING

A morning moon, ethereal ghost,  
Bewitched my breakfast, burned my toast,  
Upset my coffee, blurred the news,  
Convinced the "set" to blow a fuse.  
Then watching from my apple tree,  
It winked a knowing eye at me.  
The door compacted Kitty's tail;  
I joined her angry, doleful wail.  
A coat of ice adorned my car,  
I voiced complaints to Snap and Star.  
They snorted horse-words, rolled their eyes  
Toward the hex in moon disguise.  
Beside the highway's warming hum,  
I waited for the mail to come  
While rabbits in a hollow log  
Wished mental illness on my dog.  
A squirrel's scolding seemed to be  
Directed at the moon and me.  
Although the winter sun was high,  
The moon still clung to empty sky.  
I dropped the letters, stubbed my toe  
And vowed the moon or I must go.  
A wispy cloud absorbed the ghost.  
Requiting my most futile boast.

## WE HEAR THE CROW

Along the south fork, called the Crow  
We heard the water whisper;  
Beneath the weight of ice and snow,  
We heard its winter whimper,  
    "Please let me go,

    Please let me go,

        Please let me go."

Against the dam's pomposity,  
The sullen river muttered.  
A dormant midland heard the plea  
The Crow in anguish uttered,  
    "Please set me free,

    Please set me free,

        Please set me free."

Beyond its banks the little Crow  
Has ceased with futile sighing;  
Its force, spring fed with ice and snow  
Has loosed its flood a-crying,  
    "Just watch me go,

    Just watch me go,

        Just watch me go."

## *About the Poet*

Ann Reid was born October 19, 1922, near Buffalo Lake, Minnesota, at Pleasant Hill Farm. She reminisces, "It was here I developed my love of horses, dogs, cats and other small creatures. It was but a short walk to the one-room school where I was inspired to read and write poetry. Giving readings was the highlight of my school days."

All of nature was her inspiration while she lived on farms near Buffalo Lake and Hutchinson, Minnesota. She married James Reid, raised four sons, and today has nine grandchildren, three step-grandchildren, and 12 great-grandchildren. In addition to writing poetry, she pursued hobbies of reading, horseback riding, roller skating, baking, knitting, rock hounding, bird watching and antiquing. Ann muses: "I have always been interested in so many things; now I wonder what would have happened if I could have specialized in one."



## *A Final Word*

About the same time Ann Reid joined the League of Minnesota Poets (1960), her eldest son was dragging me home from college with him to "meet the folks" at the farm south of Hutchinson. It worked. I married him, and over the years that followed, I have enjoyed the special privilege of reading Ann's poems as she wrote them.

Since 1960, the prairie winds have blown seasons of joy and sorrow through our lives; in turn, they have enhanced my appreciation of the thoughts and images expressed by Ann's poetry.

In 1967 Ann suffered a stroke which halted her poetry writing for a while (see "The Fog"). Later seasons brought the accidental death of an exchange-student son (see "Early Star") and the illness and premature death of one of her own sons. So the sequence of many of the poems is significant.

Therefore, it seems only natural that seasons play a vital part in these poems as do a sensitivity to and delight with an often fragile nature. There is always a message of hope anchored in the stability of a strong faith.

I feel there is relevant meaning in these poems for all of the children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and friends of Ann Reid, whatever the seasons of their lives. How fortunate I am to be able to share this collection in this way.

*Carol Reid*

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